

Letter from Eliza Symonds Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, December 29, 1878

Tutelo Heights, Brantford, Ont, Can. Dec. 29th, 1878 My dear Alec. and Mabel:

I am thankful to be able to say that grandpapa and I reached our own gate yesterday about one o'clock — without any other scathe than that of being very cold. Mr. Hubbard (as you know) left Washington with us — and soon after he left our car we retired for the night — and (I at least) slept through Baltimore — becoming wide awake only at day light — when the attraction outside the window induced me to get up. We passed through such grand mountainous scenery all day — as delighted me — and which I never suspected could exist on this continent within a days journey of us. The country displayed only a moderate quantity of snow till we neared Niagara. We had also been gradually slipping into a colder atmosphere — and passed waterfalls — and cascades of solid ice. We reached Niagara at nine o'clock and thought it better to go right on to Harrisburgh that night — which place we reached about one o'clock in the morning very tired and cold. We rested there at the Hotel till ten o'clock next morning when we took the train for home. We suffered so much from cold at our Harrisburgh quarters — that I was quite frightened for Papa — but I am glad to say he does not appear to be the worse for it. A great deal of snow has fallen about home — and the road past our house is blocked up. We were obliged to drive through a field. The thermometer just now is 18, and we really feel the difference from warmer Washington and the over-heated cars. All have been well here.

We hope darling Elsie has cut through her troubles — and obtained ease, poor dear — and that Mabel is coughing less. The Dentist has not yet made Mary Horne's teeth, and says it will be yet a month or six weeks before her mouth is in a fit state. This being the case — if Mabel wants Mary particularly we do not see that she need feel herself bound to

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the Brantford Dentist — she might get herself attended to in Washington. 2 “She is not in the least in our way however — so leave her as long as you and Mabel wish.

Do not neglect to look for a marked article in one of the “globes” now sent, written by a fellow passenger of yours across the Atlantic. We found a letter at home from Aunt Ellen. She was in London with Sophie. Your Uncle was in Ireland till Christmas. All were well when she wrote and Chester better. Charley sent a very good photograph of himself holding an open paper upon which appeared Christmas good wishes. Quite a new idea, is it not?

Carrie was heard through the telephone — two or three days ago — she and the children are pretty well now — but Mrs. John Ballachey has lost one of her twins — both children I understand were very delicate. With this you will receive cards from Mrs. Cathcart. One of them was so mutilated at the edges — being too large for the envelope — that I cut them off — and have rather spoiled the appearance of the which please excuse.

I have given our home birds, dear Mabel, a full description of your, pretty house, nice Christmas dinner etc.,—and hope you are not suffering from your exertions.

As you and Alec. are one I have not written a separate note. Please let me know what you would like me to do about Mary Horne. We shall be anxious too — to hear how Elsie is also.

God bless you all. Love from your affectionate,

E. G. Bell.